

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 DAMASC 02434 161304Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 DHA-02 MCT-01 CIAE-00 PM-04
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 TRSE-00 ACDA-07 /083 W
-----161450Z 110392 /40

R 161209Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2695
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
DIA WASHDC
SECDEF WASHDC
USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 2434

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, SY, IZ
SUBJECT: ASAD NEGOTIATING RETURN OF MICHEL AFLAQ

1. REGULAR SYRIAN SOURCE TOLD US APRIL 14 THAT SARG HAD
RECENTLY RELEASED FROM PRISON 230 SUPPORTERS OF BAATH PARTY CO-
FOUNDER MICHEL AFLAQ WHO HAD BEEN JAILED ONE-TWO YEARS AGO.
ACCORDING TO SOURCE, ASAD REGIME CURRENTLY NEGOTIATING WITH
AFLAQ TO CONVINCE HIM TO RETURN FROM BAGHDAD AND RESIDE IN
DAMASCUS. SOURCE SAID NEGOTIATIONS PROBABLY BEING CONDUCTED
THROUGH SYRIAN RELATIVES OF AFLAQ'S WIFE.

2. SEPARATE SOURCE TOLD US APRIL 8 THAT DAMASCUS OPPOSITION
POLITICIANS TRYING TO ANALYZE IMPORT OF AFLAQ SPEECH
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 DAMASC 02434 161304Z

BROADCAST BY BAGHDAD SHORTLY BEFORE. ACCORDING TO THIS
SOURCE, DAMASCENES INTRIGUED BY ALLEGED COMMENT OF
AFLAQ THAT, "TOPPLING ASAD REGIME IS PAN-ARAB MISSION
WHICH BAATH PARTY HAS HONOR TO SHARE WITH OTHERS." THEY
SPECULATED THAT AFLAQ MAY HAVE SIGNALLED IRAQIS HAVE RECRUITED
NON-BAATHIST ASSETS WITHIN SYRIA OR ABROAD TO RALLY AROUND
ANTI-ASAD BANNER.

3. COMMENT: IT SEEMS THAT AFLAQ IS BEING TAKEN SERIOUSLY BY BOTH REGIME AND ITS OPPONENTS. WE RECALL THAT IN 1975 REGIME UTILIZED AFLAQ'S BROTHER, THEN MFA DEPDIRECTOR OF WEST EUROPEAN AFFAIRS, TO ATTEMPT COAX MICHEL BACK TO DAMASCUS. THIS ATTEMPT FAILED, AND BROTHER REPORTEDLY WAS SUBSEQUENTLY DETAINED ON HOUSE ARREST BY AUTHORITIES FOR SEVERAL MONTHS AND THEN ALLOWED TO RETURN TO WORK. ASAD HAS ALSO TRIED TO CONVINCE SALAH BITAR TO RETURN TO SYRIA, FIRST IN DECEMBER 1975 WHEN ASAD MET WITH BITAR RELATIVE RESIDING IN DAMASCUS TO REQUEST HE TRANSMIT TO BITAR SIGNED PRESIDENTIAL PARDON AND SECONDLY, ACCORDING TO OTHER REPORTING, WHEN BAATH PARTY RECENTLY GRANTED OFFICIAL PARDON TO BITAR. SYRIAN DISSIDNET NABIL SHUWAYRI, WHO ASSOCIATED WITH BITAR GROUP, HAS ALSO RECEIVED PARDON. ASAD MAY BE TRYING TO BLUNT EFFECTIVENESS OF AFLAQ-BITAR'S ANTI-REGIME ACTIVITIES BY EITHER WINNING THEIR RETURN TO SYRIA OR AT LEAST DEMONSTRATING TO THEIR SUPPORTERS IN THE SYRIAN BAATH PARTY THAT REGIME IS SINCERE IN ITS DESIRE TO RECONCILE WITH THEM. ASAD PERHAPS BELIEVES THAT CURRENT SECTARIAN TENSIONS IN IRAQ WILL BOLSTER HIS CAMPAIGN BY SUGGESTING THEIR FUTURE IN BAGHDAD POTENTIALLY OF LIMITED DURATION.
PELLETREAU

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPATRIATION, NEGOTIATIONS, EXILES, PARTY LEADERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 16-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977DAMASC02434
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770133-0306
Format: TEL
From: DAMASCUS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770450/aaaabrht.tel
Line Count: 85
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 06e8cba3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2787606
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ASAD NEGOTIATING RETURN OF MICHEL AFLAQ
TAGS: PINS, SY, IZ, (ASAD, HAFIZ AL), (AFLAQ, MICHEL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/06e8cba3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009